

**ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE****VARIABLE CURVATURE IN TAPE GUIDE ROLLERS**

5           An apparatus is provided for reducing tape media  
edge damage in data regions and controlling the position  
of the tape media in a passive manner. A curved tape  
guide surface of a tape guide roller controls tape media  
edge damage by restoring the tape media to a properly  
10 aligned position on a tape guide roller by using tape  
guide rollers with curved edge stops that exert a force  
to the tape media during a lateral shift. As the tape  
moves around the roller, the restoring force exerted by  
the curved portion of the tape guide roller on the tape  
15 during any lateral shift restores the tape to a centered  
position. Keeping the tape media in a centered position  
reduces tape edge wear, lessens degradation of the  
integrity of the tape and increases the useful lifetime  
of the tape.